



City Attorney's Office  
Community Development

# AGENDA REPORT

<b>DATE:</b>	May 27, 2025
<b>TO:</b>	Mayor Martinez and Members of the City Council
<b>FROM:</b>	Shannon Moore, Chief Assistant City Attorney Lina Velasco, Director of Community Development
<b>Subject:</b>	First Amendment to the Legal Services Agreement with Best Best & Krieger, LLP for Code Enforcement Advice
<b>FINANCIAL IMPACT:</b>	The funds for this Legal Services Agreement have been allocated in the City Attorney's office Fiscal Year (FY) 2024-25 budget. Additional funds are proposed in the FY 2025-26 budget. Account String 01151014-400206
<b>PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION:</b>	N/A
<b>STATEMENT OF THE ISSUE:</b>	To strengthen the City's efforts in addressing quality-of-life concerns, such as tobacco control and illegal dumping, the City Attorney's Office is seeking to enhance its legal support in the area of code enforcement. While there is currently no in-house attorney dedicated to this specialty, the City Attorney's Office, in partnership with Community Development, recommends retaining the law firm of Best Best & Krieger. Their expertise will provide valuable guidance and effective representation in code enforcement matters, helping the City proactively and efficiently address these important community issues.
<b>RECOMMENDED ACTION:</b>	APPROVE a first amendment to the legal services agreement with Best Best & Krieger, LLP, to increase the compensation by \$265,000, for an amount not to exceed \$275,000, and to extend through December 31, 2026, to continue providing specialized legal advice and representation in support of quality-of-life and nuisance

	abatement efforts – City Attorney’s Office/Community Development Department (Shannon Moore 510-620-6505/Lina Velasco 510-620-6841).
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## **DISCUSSION:**

As part of the City of Richmond’s ongoing efforts to enhance community well-being and prevent crime, additional legal support is needed to effectively address a range of code enforcement issues - particularly those related to tobacco, cannabis, illegal dumping, and public nuisances. To meet this need, the City Attorney’s Office, in collaboration with Community Development, has engaged Christina Hickey, counsel with the law firm Best Best & Krieger, LLP (BBK), to provide specialized code enforcement legal services.

Ms. Hickey brings over 14 years of legal experience and regularly advises on code enforcement matters. She works closely with Richmond Police Department and the Code Enforcement Division to enforce the City’s Municipal Code and support quality-of-life improvements through both civil and criminal legal pathways, including nuisance abatement.

An initial legal services agreement with BBK was authorized in the amount of \$10,000. In order to continue receiving this vital legal support and to maintain momentum in addressing key issues like illegal dumping and unresolved public nuisances, an amendment to the agreement is now recommended.

The proposed amendment would increase the agreement by \$265,000, for a total not-to-exceed amount of \$275,000, and extend the term through December 31, 2026. BBK’s rates are \$330 per hour for attorneys and \$185 per hour for paralegals, clerks, and analysts.

The City Attorney’s Office and Community Development Department jointly request City Council approval of this amendment to ensure continued, focused legal support for code enforcement efforts that directly contribute to a cleaner, safer, and more livable Richmond.

## **DOCUMENTS ATTACHED:**

Attachment 1 – Proposed First Amendment to the Legal Services Agreement with BBK  
Attachment 2 – Original Legal Services Agreement with BBK